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ABSTRACT

This study investigated teacher recruitment and retention patterns in the District of Columbia schools, characteristics of the D.C. teaching force, incentive awards already operating in the District, financial incentives for attracting and retraining qualified teachers, and the feasibility of using the current teacher evaluation process for identifying outstanding teachers. The study also included a survey of all D.C. teachers and principals about their views of existing incentives and teaching conditions as well as their opinions of proposed incentive plans. The first section discusses concepts underlying merit pay proposals and the underlying problems and issues involved. In the second section, research on teacher incentive programs is reviewed. The third section presents the findings of the D.C. survey, and recommendations of the study task force on career development incentives and incentive awards are set forth in the final section. (JD)

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
STUDY OF TEACHER INCENTIVES: SUMMARY REPORT

This study was conducted under the aegis of the United States Congress, District of Columbia Appropriation Act, 1984, P.L. 98-125

May 1984
Washington, D.C.

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PREFACE

This study was conducted for the District of Columbia Public Schools under the guidance of the Superintendent's Task Force on Merit Pay for Teachers. The study was funded by request of the U.S. Congress as part of a planning effort to develop a "balanced and comprehensive system which will embrace the concepts of merit pay and exemplary teacher recognition . . . to recognize outstanding teachers through both monetary and professional incentives."

This report examines teacher incentive plans in the context of teaching force trends and existing incentive structures that shape teaching policies and conditions in the D.C. Public Schools. An independent team of researchers collected and analyzed the data included in this document. The report was prepared by study consultant, Linda Darling-Hammond, with the assistance of Karen Johnson Pittman, Arthur E. Wise, William W. Ellis, Andrea J. Love, Anita F. Allen, Elaine C. Melmed, Kathryn B. Foster, Kay T. Payne, Jacqueline Reed, and Suzanne Benda. Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Joan W. Brown, coordinated the study and planning activities.

Based on the study findings, the Superintendent's Task Force developed the recommendations presented in the final chapter of this report. A supplemental volume to this report includes a more detailed description of the study methods and results. It is the hope of the task force and study team that this report will provide a useful framework for the ongoing task of maintaining an excellent teaching force in the D.C. Public Schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The goal of the study was to develop a "balanced and comprehensive system which will embrace the concepts of merit pay and exemplary teacher recognition . . . to recognize outstanding teachers through both monetary and professional incentives." The study was designed to examine existing teacher incentives in the D.C. Public School system and to explore promising alternatives for rewarding exemplary teachers. The study also sought to identify incentives for attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers and for encouraging professional development of teachers.

CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

A Superintendent's task force on merit pay for teachers was appointed in November, 1983 including teachers, administrators, parents, and community representatives. The task force met with national experts on teacher evaluation, reward, and incentive systems; reviewed the existing research on merit pay and other teacher incentive plans; and assessed the results of an independent commissioned study on teaching policies and conditions in the D.C. Public Schools.

The study investigated teacher recruitment and retention patterns in the D.C. Schools, characteristics of the D.C. teaching force, incentive awards already operating in the district, financial incentives for attracting and retaining qualified teachers, and the feasibility of using the current teacher evaluation process for identifying outstanding teachers. The study also included a survey of all D.C. teachers and principals about their views of existing incentives and teaching conditions as well as their opinions of proposed incentive plans.

MAJOR STUDY FINDINGS

The study team reviewed the research on merit pay, master teacher plans, and other incentive plans, and concluded that the success of any of these plans depends upon adequate planning, sufficient funding, and consideration of the district's specific teaching conditions and needs. The study revealed many important conditions in the D.C. Public Schools that undergird the task force recommendations.

- More than one-fourth of D.C.'s teaching force will retire over the next decade, and an additional 50% of the district's teachers will be nearing retirement age by 1993. Meanwhile, like many other districts, D.C. is experiencing shortages of qualified teachers in certain subject areas and a projected growth in school enrollment at the early grades. Thus, the most critical area for teacher quality will be D.C.'s recruitment, selection, and induction policies for new teachers.

- D.C.'s teachers salaries are competitive with those of other school districts (although there is some drop off at the upper end of the scale for those with advanced degrees), but less competitive with other occupations that prospective teachers might consider. The need to attract high quality applicants in large numbers may require salary increases.

- D.C. currently does not have a highly-developed mechanism for providing supervision and assistance to new teachers (or to other teachers having difficulty). Lack of support in the early years of teaching can contribute to high attrition rates for new teachers as well as negatively affect teaching quality.

- Experienced teachers in D.C. have fewer oppportunities than those in many other districts to assume differentiated roles or responsibilities for additional pay. These kinds of opportunities for professional growth and advancement are important motivators of teachers.

- D.C. teachers and principals are supportive of the district's existing awards programs, and would like to see greater opportunities for developing and implementing exemplary teaching practices. Although they do not support the idea of merit pay bonuses, they do support the idea of extra pay and enhanced responsibility for "master" teachers who would be recognized for their outstanding performance and would assume instructional leadership roles in assisting their peers.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The task force has recommended several major components of a teacher recognition and incentive plan for DCPS:

1. Creation of a cadre of "master" or "mentor" teachers (using a newly devised selection process) who would receive stipends and released time to assist new teachers. This recommendation would advance the goals of providing recognition and extra pay for excellent teachers while providing support for new teachers who would serve a year-long internship under the guidance of these expert, experienced teachers.

2. Longer-range planning toward the goal of developing a more comprehensive career ladder for teachers over the next few years. The career ladder concept would link major salary increases to performance-based career advancement. It would restructure the induction and promotion processes for the large new wave of entrants that will begin entering the district in the next few years by establishing career stages with differential salary ranges and responsibilities for beginning teachers, career teachers, and senior or master teachers. Progression through the career ladder would be based on a new and more rigorous evaluation system buttressed by enhanced staff development opportunities.

3. An expansion of the Teacher Incentive Awards program in this coming school year, so that more teachers are eligible to win awards and winners would have opportunities to demonstrate and disseminate their practices through inservice workshops and other means. This would also serve to recognize excellent teachers while enhancing their own professional development and that of others who are interested in adopting the practices.

4. Development of a school incentive award program that would recognize outstanding school progress and would include grants of discretionary money to schools to spend on specific improvement efforts proposed by the staff. This approach has been used successfully in other districts to reward staff efforts while promoting cooperation and planning at the school level.

The study and recommendations also point to needs for a review of teacher certification and selection practices and steps to improve working conditions for teachers.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of a study on merit pay for D.C. Public School teachers conducted by request of the U.S. Congress. The study was designed to examine existing teacher incentives in the D.C. Public School system and to explore promising alternatives for rewarding exemplary teachers. The goal of the study was the development of a "balanced and comprehensive system which will embrace the concepts of merit pay and exemplary teacher recognition . . . to recognize outstanding teachers through both monetary and professional incentives."[1]

To implement this charge, the Superintendent commissioned an independent study of merit pay and appointed a task force in November, 1983 comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, and community representatives. (A list of task force activities is included in Appendix A to this report.) The role of the advisory task force was to guide the course of the study, weigh the evidence resulting from the study, and make recommendations about the types of incentive plans that could make a positive contribution to education in the D.C. Public Schools. The study and planning process were designed to develop a plan that would meet the following objectives:

1. enhance the district's ability to attract and retain highly qualified teachers;

2. provide recognition and incentives for the professional self-development of teachers; and

3. improve the quality of the teaching and learning environment.

The task force met with national experts on teacher evaluation, reward, and incentive systems; reviewed the existing research on merit pay and other teacher incentive plans; and assessed the results of the study (reported here) on teaching policies and conditions in the D.C. Public Schools. The study investigated teacher recruitment and retention patterns in the D.C. Public Schools, characteristics of the D.C. teaching force, incentive plans already operating in the district, and comparative financial incentives for attracting and retaining teachers in the D.C. Public Schools relative to neighboring school districts. The study also examined the currently used teacher evaluation process in D.C. for its appropriateness as a means for identifying outstanding teachers. Finally, the study included a survey of teachers and principals about their views of existing incentives and disincentives for teachers and their opinions of proposed incentive plans.

The remainder of this introductory section discusses the concepts underlying merit pay and other teacher incentive plans, and examines the problems in the teaching profession that these incentive plans are meant to address. Section 2 presents a review of research on teacher incentives and on merit pay plans. Section 3 presents the major findings of the D.C. study and concludes with a discussion of the study's implications for an incentive plan that would meet the specific needs and teaching conditions of the D.C. Public Schools. Section 4 presents the recommendations of the D.C. Task Force on Merit Pay for Teachers. A supplemental volume to this report includes a more detailed description of the study methods and results.

CONCEPTS UNDERLYING MERIT PAY PROPOSALS

Over the past year and a half, a number of major reports on the quality of American education have been issued. Beginning with the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, over 30 commissions have pointed to a decline in the quality of education, and have called for higher educational standards, increased course requirements, and other major reforms. Most of the reports have emphasized that changes in the structure of the teaching profession are needed to provide more incentives for

[1]Senate D.C. Appropriations Subcommittee, FY 1984 report, as amended by Conference Committee.

attracting and retaining talented people in teaching. Among the most widely-publicized of these proposals is the notion of performance-based pay for teachers, generically called "merit pay."

Merit pay is meant to recognize the efforts of excellent teachers, and indirectly, to retain talented teachers in the profession by providing financial incentives for good performance. However, the concepts that underlie merit pay proposals are broader than the single notion of pay for performance. The National Commission on Excellence in Education, for example, recommended that:

> Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market sensitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated. . . . School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher. . . . Master teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs and in supervising teachers during their probationary years.[2]

The recommendations of the Excellence Commission and of other major national commissions include merit pay as one of several reforms meant to improve teacher preparation and continuing professional development while enhancing the ability of the profession to attract and retain talented people. The broader set of objectives is intended to "make teaching a more rewarding and respected profession"[3] through changes in the overall occupational structure of teaching.

In this broader view, then, the concepts underlying merit pay proposals are that teacher compensation and career structures should be re-designed so that they provide incentives for professional development much like those of other professional occupations. The basic premise is that such changes will attract and retain better qualified persons in teaching and will improve teaching effectiveness.

THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM

Merit pay and other teacher incentive plans are offered as a response to recently recognized problems in the teaching profession. These problems are manifest in current and pending shortages in the supply of qualified teachers and in declines in the academic ability of new entrants to teaching. These trends are occurring while an increase in school enrollments and an increase in teacher retirements are creating a substantial demand for new teachers. These converging trends lead many experts to predict a substantial shortage of qualified teachers in the next few years unless major changes in the attractiveness of teaching take place.

Teacher Supply

For the past decade, there has been a widely recognized surplus of teachers as school enrollments were declining. However, in recent years, shortages have been building in certain teaching areas, particularly in secondary school teaching specialties. These shortages are now quite severe in mathematics and the sciences, and they extend even to areas like English (ASCUS, 1984). In 1981, more than half of the newly graduated teachers in mathematics and science were not certified or eligible for certification in the field they were hired to teach. More than one-third of newly graduated hirees in English, social studies, and other specialties were not certifiable for their teaching assignments (NCES, 1983).

The shortage of math and science teachers is a precursor of a more general shortage of qualified teachers. As the number and proportion of education degrees have plummeted over the past decade (from 21 percent of all bachelor's degrees in 1971 to under 12 percent in 1981), the number of attritions and

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[2]Recommendations on teaching, from The National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform.*

[3]*Ibid.*

pending retirements have increased. The most dramatic declines have occurred in math and science. In 1981, the nation's colleges produced fewer than 1400 graduates certified to teach math or science. Of this number only about half went into teaching after graduation. In the following year, about 18,000 math and science teachers left their teaching positions. Furthermore, an estimated 80,000 math and science teachers (about 40 percent of the math/science teaching force) will retire over the next decade (NCES, 1983; NSTA, 1984).

The supply picture is only somewhat less severe for other types of teachers. As Figure 1 indicates, by about 1988, the supply of new teachers will satisfy only about 80 percent of the demand for new teachers due to the decline in the number of teaching graduates coupled with a large wave of teacher retirements and an increasing school-aged population (NCES, 1981). These trends will affect different school districts at different points in time and with different degrees of severity, but there is no mistaking the fact that the attractiveness of teaching as a profession is on the wane.

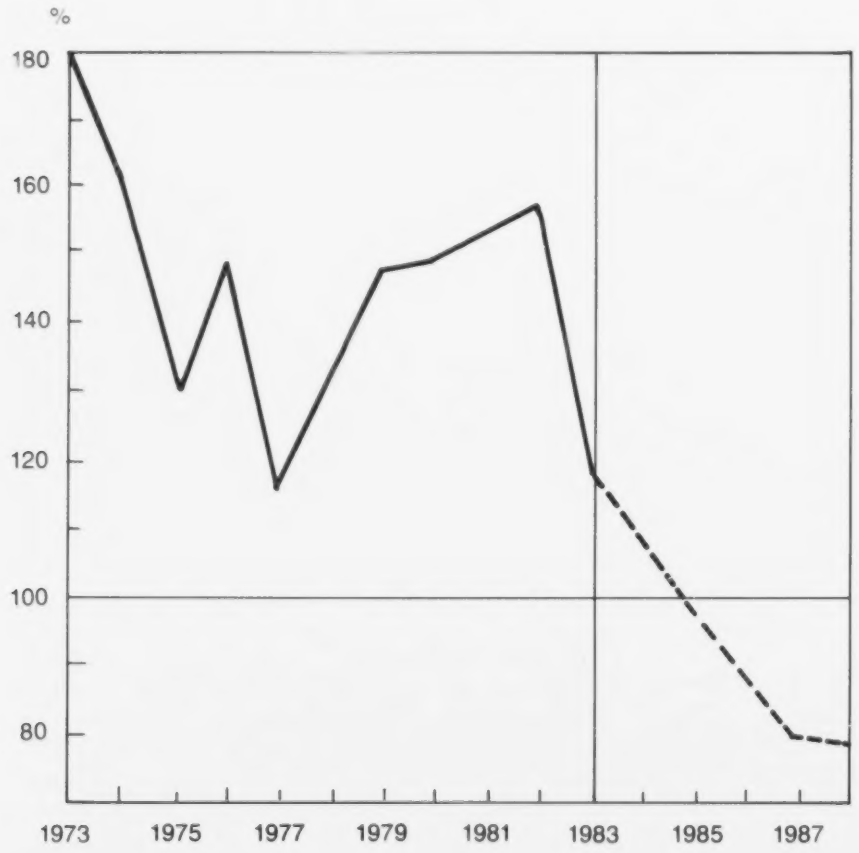

Fig. 1 — Supply of New Teachers as a Percentage of Demand for Additional Teachers

SOURCE: Table 2.9, National Education Association, *Teacher Supply and Demand in Public Schools*, 1973, 1976, 1977, and 1978, and U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, *Projections of Education Statistics to 1988–89*, 1980.

Low salaries and low occupational prestige are major reasons for the inability of teaching to recruit new entrants. As Figure 2 demonstrates, beginning salaries for teachers nationwide are lower than those in virtually any other field requiring a bachelor's degree, even if teachers' salaries are adjusted to reflect a twelve-month equivalent. Teachers' salaries also top out much sooner and at a much lower level than salaries of other workers with a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, teachers' salaries have lost ground

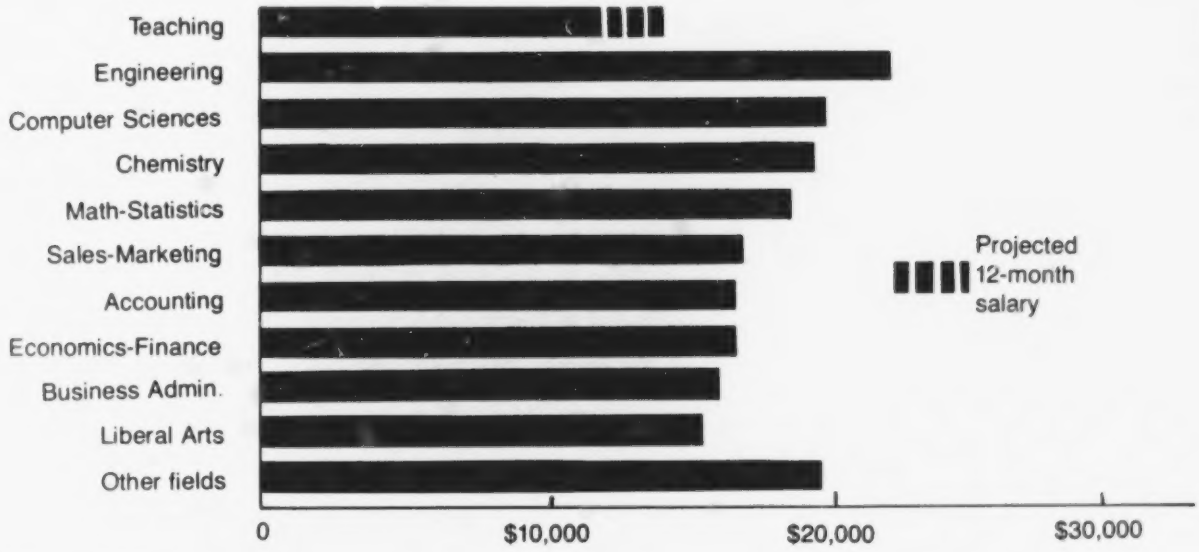

Fig. 2 — Beginning Teachers' Salaries Compared to Beginning Salaries in Other Occupations, 1981

SOURCE: National Education Association, *Prices, Budgets, Salaries and Income,* (Washington, D.C.: NEA), October 1982.

relative to other occupational salaries over the past ten years. Average annual teachers' salaries declined by more than 12 percent between 1971 and 1981, despite the fact that the average experience level of the teaching force was increasing over that period of time, as was the average education level (NCES, 1983).

The lack of financial incentives for choosing teaching as an occupation has contributed to changes in the composition of the incoming teaching force, and may also contribute to the attrition of qualified teachers who are leaving the profession for other kinds of employment. In addition to the supply problems described above, the new cohort of teachers entering and remaining in the occupation is less academically qualified than those who are leaving or retiring.

Teacher Quality

While the supply of new teachers has been declining and demand is on the increase, the ability of the teaching profession to attract and retain academically able recruits has also been diminishing. There is currently a sharp decline in the college entrance test scores for students planning to teach (Weaver, 1979, 1981; NCES, 1983). Not only do education majors score lower than other college majors on tests of academic ability, but their test scores are declining more steeply than those of the national college-bound population as a whole. The decline is largely due to a significant decrease in the number and proportion of academically able women choosing education as a career (Vance and Schlechty, 1982).

One of the most profound changes in the labor market conditions affecting teaching is the expanded set of opportunities available to minorities and women. Academically talented members of these groups, who were once barred from most professional occupations other than teaching, are now entering other fields. In 1971, for example, 36 percent of all bachelor's degrees granted to women were in the field of education. By 1982, the percentage had dropped to 17 percent (Bureau of the Census, 1983). Women's occupation choices shifted from education to business, medicine, law, and the sciences over this period of time.

As education attracts fewer and fewer of the most academically able group of students, most of the relatively small group of high-scoring students recruited to education leave the profession within a very few years (Schlechty and Vance, 1981; Vance and Schlechty, 1982). Of the high school class of 1973, 28 percent of the lowest quintile of SAT scorers went into teaching, and more than half of them planned to

stay: only 8 percent of the highest quintile went into teaching, and only one-fourth of them planned to stay in the profession (Vance and Schlechty, 1982). A study of North Carolina teachers found that while two-thirds of the highest scorers on the National Teachers Examination left teaching within seven years, only one-third of the lowest scorers left during the same period of time (Schlechty and Vance, 1981).

Other studies show that teaching is less able to retain teachers than in the past, and that teacher dissatisfaction is at an all-time high. Fewer than half of all current teachers plan to stay in teaching until retirement (down from 75 percent in 1976), and 40 percent say they would not choose teaching again (more than triple the proportion voicing dissatisfaction in 1971) (NEA, 1983). However, salaries are not the number one reason for dissatisfaction or for plans to leave teaching. Working conditions such as cooperation from administrators, teaching load and extra duties, school environment and freedom to teach, school policies, and administrative paperwork burdens all rank higher than salaries as concerns of current teachers (NEA, 1983).

SUMMARY

The teaching profession is currently unable to attract and retain a sufficient supply of academically qualified teachers to staff our nation's classrooms. There are several conditions that contribute to this problem. Decreases in teacher supply are occurring as a lagged response to past surpluses and as the attractiveness of teaching as a profession has declined. Decreases in the quality of those entering and remaining in teaching are occurring as education is no longer able to attract academically able students and as more qualified members of the current teaching force leave. Current attrition trends will be exacerbated by the pending retirements of a very large portion of the current teaching force over the next decade.

These factors are converging at a time when enrollment trends are leading to increased demand for teachers. As a consequence of these combined factors, the nation's school districts will have to hire and retain large numbers of marginally qualified people into teaching unless major changes in the incentive structure of the occupation are made.

The concepts underlying merit pay proposals are meant to address problems related to the incentive structure for teaching. In their narrowest form, merit pay proposals treat financial incentives for inservice teachers. In the broader context within which merit pay proposals have been advanced however, they are meant to provide a cornerstone for a new career structure that will provide incentives for recruitment, professional development, and retention of highly qualified teachers. This study examines the concept of merit pay from the broader perspective and examines its potential contribution to an improved incentive structure for teachers in the D.C. Public Schools.

II. TEACHER INCENTIVES

This section reviews the research on incentives known to influence teacher attraction, retention, and improvement and the available research on teacher incentive plans, including merit pay. The research points to the importance of nonmonetary as well as monetary incentives for teachers and to the need for a comprehensive approach in developing new teacher incentive plans.

REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON TEACHER INCENTIVES

The types of incentives needed to attract academically able recruits into teaching and to retain teachers in the profession are different at least in degree, if not in kind. Low salaries and low occupational prestige are important factors cited by those who do not choose teaching as an occupation (Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984; Musemeche and Adams, 1978; Page and Page, 1982; Roberson et al., 1983). Those who aspire to teach and who, in fact, enter teaching place less importance on financial incentives, perhaps because they do not perceive other higher paying alternatives for themselves or because they are motivated by other factors (Lortie, 1975; Schlechty and Vance, 1983). However, teachers cite low salaries and low occupational prestige as two of the least encouraging factors related to occupational choice (Bredeson et al., 1983; Page and Pagem, 1982).

Those who enter teaching explain their choice in terms of service motives and personal values, such as a desire to work with children, to contribute to society, and to foster learning (Lortie, 1975; Darling-Hammond and Wise, 1979; Wood, 1978). Furthermore, inservice teachers describe the satisfactions and rewards of their work in similar terms. The primary reward of teaching is a sense that the teacher is contributing to the growth and development of his or her students (Lortie, 1975; Jackson, 1968; Bredeson et al., 1983; Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984). This sense of efficacy is crucial for teacher improvement (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983), and it also appears to have a strong effect on student learning outcomes (Berman and McLaughlin, 1977; Armor et al., 1976; Brookover, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979).

In a review of research on teacher incentives, Rosenholtz and Smylie (1984) find that teacher attrition is most related to teaching conditions that undermine teacher efficacy—that is, the teacher's ability to do an effective job of teaching. These conditions include lack of opportunity for professional growth; inadequate preparation time; conflict with or lack of approval from administrators; and inability to deal effectively with student misbehavior. Salaries are a contributing factor in decisions to leave teaching, but a generally less important one. (See also Chapman and Hutcheson, 1982; Bredeson et al., 1983; Litt and Turk, 1983).

One of the greatest impediments to teachers' professional growth and skill development is teacher isolation (Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984; Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Lortie, 1975). Teachers spend most of their time physically isolated from colleagues, and there are often few organizational incentives for teacher interaction about specific problems of educational practice. Isolation is most keenly felt by beginning teachers, who feel generally unprepared for what they face in the classroom and who are typically left to their own devices to develop the necessary skills. Thus, it is not surprising that attrition from teaching is highest in the first few years of teaching (Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984; Burlingame, 1980; Dworkin, 1980). Schlechty and Vance (1983) estimate that as many as half of the teachers entering the profession in 1983 will have left by 1990, and most will leave within the first three years of teaching.

Less isolated, collegial settings in which structures exist for teachers to assist each other and to solve problems collectively characterize effective schools. These collegial settings also appear to enhance teacher satisfaction and efficacy along with student learning outcomes (Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984; Walberg and Genova, 1982; Ashton et al., 1983). Experienced teachers profit from opportunities to assume new challenges and leadership roles, while less experienced teachers profit from the technical assistance

provided by their veteran colleagues. Opportunities for leadership and professional recognition seem to enhance the retention of effective, experienced teachers (Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984; Chapman and Hutcheson, 1982; Start et al., 1980).

Incentives for teacher improvement also seem to be strongly influenced by intrinsic professional rewards and a supportive environment. If teachers believe their efforts will result in increased effectiveness with students (i.e., greater efficacy) and they receive collegial support, they are more likely to undertake change (Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984; Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). In general, increased efficacy depends on goals and rewards that are personally valued and on a responsive environment in which chances of success are good (Bandura, 1982; Vroom, 1964; Lewin et al., 1944; Fuller et al., 1982).

Although there is no research that specifically addresses the issue of financial incentives as a stimulus for teacher improvement, McLaughlin and Marsh (1978) found in their research on educational change that teachers who received extra pay for training to promote innovation were *less* likely to achieve their goals for change—including student achievement gains—than others not offered incentive pay. This is not conclusive evidence that financial incentives are ineffective. However, as Rosenholtz and Smylie (1984) conclude: "It appears that without the promise of intrinsic professional rewards and a supportive work setting combined, financial incentives will not be sufficient to motivate teachers to change."

In summary, the research on teacher incentives suggests that financial incentives are more important for attracting talented people into teaching than for retaining teachers. Teacher retention is enhanced by professional rewards—success with students and opportunities for professional growth—and, indirectly, by working conditions that make possible the attainment of these intrinsic rewards. Teacher attrition is highest in the early years of teaching, particularly when assistance and support are absent. Teacher satisfaction, efficacy, and student learning are enhanced in collegial environments that minimize teacher isolation by allowing opportunities for mutual problem-solving and assistance. Intrinsic rewards—recognition and opportunities for professional growth and leadership—appear to be more potent motivators for teacher improvement than financial incentives alone.

REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON MERIT PAY AND OTHER TEACHER INCENTIVE PLANS

A number of reviews of teacher incentive plans have been recently published (Hatry and Greiner, 1984; Jordan and Borkow, 1983; Educational Research Service, 1979, 1983; AASA, 1984; Hall, 1983). However, as these reviews all note, research on the *effects* of merit pay and other teacher incentive plans is most notable by its absence from the literature. Most of the research describes plans that are in operation and conditions that seem to influence the survival of various approaches. This section summarizes the premises underlying different types of teacher incentive plans and the conditions that appear to influence success as defined by longevity of operation.[1]

A number of approaches to teacher incentives have been proposed and attempted under the general rubric of merit pay. Most reviews distinguish at least three types of incentive plans.

1. *Merit pay plans* in which performance-based salary increments are annually determined and annually awarded. Extra pay is usually, although not always, in the form of a bonus rather than an addition to base pay. Merit pay may be awarded to teachers based on individual performance or based on group performance (e.g., department or school performance).

2. *"Master teacher" plans* in which teachers assume a differentiated rank or role based on their competence, and the designation is accompanied by a salary increase. Master teacher as a rank is

[1]Appendix B contains a summary of "pros," "cons," and conditions for effective implementation of three major types of incentive plans: individual teacher bonus awards (merit pay and other awards); career ladder and differentiated staff plans; and school incentive awards.

based on a career ladder concept featuring promotion points like other professions. Master teacher as a role is a differentiated staff concept in which job assignments for master teachers entail duties like supervising new teachers in addition to classroom teaching. The two concepts may be combined.

3. *Incentive pay plans* in which teachers receive additional pay based on their teaching assignment (e.g., teaching in an area of shortage, like math or science, or teaching in a high-priority location, like an inner city school). Technically, this type of incentive pay is not really "merit" pay because it does not rely on judgments of performance.

Many districts have used elements of all three of these approaches in fashioning an incentive plan.

Non-salary incentives are also incorporated in many plans. These incentives include awards to teachers or schools for conducting and disseminating exemplary projects or school improvement programs as well as sabbaticals, opportunities for conference attendance, and tuition assistance grants. In a number of districts where teachers can choose the form of their award, they have opted for professional development or project grants rather than salary bonuses.

Research on Merit Pay Plans

Merit pay has a long but erratic history in American schools. A number of merit pay plans have been tried and abandoned since the turn of the century, most notably in the 1920s and the 1950s. Single salary schedules were adopted in most school districts because of inequities in other types of salary schedules: secondary school teachers were paid more than elementary school teachers, men were paid more than women, and white teachers were paid more than black teachers. In the 1940s and '50s Delaware and New York had statewide merit pay plans that lasted a short time. Now no states have such plans.[2]

A survey of 3,000 school districts by the Education Research Service (1979) found that 4 percent of respondents were using some kind of incentive plan, while 8 percent had once tried merit pay but had abandoned it. The major reasons for the failures of these plans were:

1. teacher evaluation procedures—difficulty in determining who deserves extra pay, lack of reliability and validity in evaluation, insufficient data to support ratings;

2. administrative problems—increased recordkeeping requirements, excessive burden on administrators responsible for evaluation, and parental complaints about who would be assigned to the "meritorious" teachers;

3. staff dissension—low morale due to artificial cutoff restrictions on awards, exclusion of teachers from program planning and development, competition among teachers, and charges of favoritism; and

4. financial problems—costs of bonuses; increased evaluation costs, and increased administrative costs.

Other researchers have found that merit pay plans have encountered difficulty in the private sector for many of the same reasons (Meyer, 1975; Mikalachki, 1976; Winstanley, 1982). The places where merit pay has survived for many years are typically small, fairly wealthy school districts to which the following conditions pertain:

- Most teachers receive merit pay awards each year, although the amounts may vary. There are no quotas for the number of teachers eligible.

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[2]"Merit pay" approaches recently initiated in California, Florida, and Tennessee are actually master teacher plans. They are discussed in the next section.

- Base teachers' salaries are already professionally competitive; funding for basic salaries, improved evaluation, and merit pay awards are consistent and plentiful.

- Performance evaluation (i.e., the teacher evaluation rating based on annual classroom observation) is a small part of the overall determination; many other criteria are used. These often include teacher initiatives in developing projects that contribute to the overall school program as well as group initiatives.

- Award determinations are based on a carefully designed, comprehensive process that uses multiple sources of input and, often, multiple evaluators. Evaluators are well-trained and substantial time is spent on evaluation. An appeals process is included.

- Teachers are heavily involved in both the design and the implementation of the merit pay system.

Most experts agree that unless these conditions can be achieved, merit pay plans are more likely to be counterproductive than helpful to retention and morale.

Research on Master Teacher Plans

"Master teacher" plans in the form of differentiated staff assignments are used by a large number of districts. Differentiated staff plans involve experienced teachers who are judged as highly competent by peers and administrators in specific extra duties. These teachers (often called "senior teachers," "consulting teachers," or "teacher leaders") have released time or extended contracts with an additional stipend for performing particular tasks, such as assisting new teachers and teachers who are having difficulty, developing inservice activities, or conducting demonstration projects. California's new mentor teacher program, which will award salary stipends to outstanding teachers who assist new teachers, is an example of a recent state initiative in this category.

Proponents of differentiated staff plans argue that retention of highly qualified teachers is enhanced by offering both financial rewards and opportunities for increased professional responsibilities. This approach can also help improve instructional effectiveness as "master" teachers provide intensive assistance to new teachers and others who need additional help which administrators do not have time or expertise to offer. In a recent Rand study of highly developed teacher evaluation practices, the four case study districts chosen for especially successful approaches all used a cadre of expert, experienced teachers to assist those needing extra assistance (Wise et al., 1984).

Career ladder approaches are a more recent, and less tested, form of recognition and differentiated pay. Such plans feature several career steps (e.g., apprentice, career teacher, and master teacher) with promotions based on performance evaluation which are accompanied by significant salary hikes. Promotions entail additional responsibilities as in the differentiated staff model described above. Proponents argue that career ladders provide significant, long-term incentives for teachers that enhance professional development and provide both monetary and nonmonetary rewards. Tennessee's newly-enacted Master Teacher Program is based on the career ladder concept, as is a plan to be implemented in Charlotte- Mecklenberg, North Carolina next year. Modified versions of this approach have existed for more than twenty years in Ladue, Missouri (which has a merit pay plan that incorporates three salary scales tied to career stages) and in Evanston, Illinois.

These plans incorporate the career structure components of higher education and of many other professions in which induction into the profession is supervised by experienced practitioners, promotions entail greater responsibility for organizational improvement efforts, and standards of practice are developed and conveyed by those with demonstrated competence. Higher salaries and recognition are possible without becoming an administrator; thus expert practitioners are retained in the classroom.

As mentioned above, career ladders in teaching are a relatively new concept, and little research is available to guide new efforts. Rosenholtz and Smylie (1984) argue from their research on teacher

incentives that career ladders hold promise for encouraging instructional improvement and for improving teacher retention by offering assistance and recognition for professional development of both new and experienced teachers. Jordan and Borkow (1983) further note that "[i]n contrast to the merit pay option, the financial and professional status of master teachers would appear to have more stability rather than being subject to the uncertainty of an annual determination of a merit allowance."

Most experts offer the following cautions about master teacher plans:

- Differentiated responsibilities assigned to master teachers should be carefully defined, instructional assistance functions. Released time should be protected from other administrative chores, and master teachers should continue to spend the majority of their time in the classroom.

- The selection process for master teachers should be careful and thorough, using many sources of input and multiple criteria, with safeguards that ensure fair application of criteria. Many districts use a panel of teachers and administrators which reviews all applications for differentiated staff positions, and which monitors the ongoing implementation of the program.

- In the case of career ladders especially, since such a plan involves major salary increases and restructuring of virtually all personnel functions, careful, long-range planning should occur before implementation.

- Teachers should be heavily involved in the design and implementation of a master teacher plan.

Research on Incentive Pay Plans

Incentive pay plans offer additional stipends to teachers who hold certain positions (e.g., teach a particular subject or in a particular school) or who exhibit certain behaviors the district would like to encourage (e.g., high attendnace or additional training related to their particular assignment). These plans attempt to influence the supply, turnover, and distribution of teachers rather than the quality of teaching. They reward teachers for the conditions under which they teach, rather than for their performance or the amount of responsibility they have been given.

Houston's "Second Mile Plan" is an example of a local district incentive program. Bonuses of various amounts are awarded for attendance, teaching in a shortage area, teaching in disadvantaged areas, professional growth, and outstanding performance. Most of the award money is based on the non-performance criteria. Florida's recently enacted merit pay plan includes a provision authorizing local school districts to provide salary incentives for attendance, teaching in a shortage area, outstanding performance, or other legislatively-defined policy objectives.

Hatry and Greiner (1984) report than an evaluation of Houston's plan after two years indicated improvements in teacher attendance and teacher turnover, decreases in teacher vacancies, but no effect on student achievement. (Student test scores are a basis for school incentive awards in Houston.) Teacher attitudes about the plan were quite mixed. The annual cost of the bonuses ranged from $7 million to $11 million over the first four years of implementation. Jordan and Borkow (1983) suggest that incentive pay plans may have a positive impact on the supply, turnover, and distribution of teachers. Such plans, however, are not specifically designed to influence the quality of teaching or the nature of teachers' responsibilities.

Research on Non-Salary Incentives

A large number of districts use non-salary incentives instead of, or as part of, a salary incentive plan. These incentives include recognition for outstanding teaching practices; funds to develop, implement, and/or disseminate promising practices (for individual teachers, groups of teachers, or schools); sabbaticals and other opportunities for professional development. These types of incentives are intended to recognize teacher excellence and innovation and to encourage professional development.

Some districts that have merit pay plans (such as the Catalina Foothills and Tempe Union school districts in Arizona) use both cash awards and other incentives, such as conference attendance or special materials and equipment purchases for classroom use. The Impact II program in New York City and Houston offers awards to teachers who have developed promising teaching practices. The awards include both stipends and opportunities to disseminate the practices to other teachers through workshops and other staff development activities. School improvement grants are used in many districts to encourage cooperative efforts on the part of school staff to address particular school needs. The Richmond, Virginia merit pay plan includes school awards to be used for improvement as school staff decide.

These types of awards have generally received an enthusiastic reception from teachers because they appeal to a sense of professionalism, they provide opportunities for teacher interaction and professional growth, and they enhance the intrinsic rewards of teaching (Hatry and Griner, 1984; Rosenholtz and Smylie, 1984). Incentives for group efforts that encourage staff participation in organizational problem solving and decisionmaking have been found to improve productivity in the private sector (Katzell and Guzzo, 1983) and are a key to the success of effective schools programs (Pratzner, 1984; Mackenzie; 1983; Miles et al., 1983).

ISSUES RELATED TO TEACHER INCENTIVE PLANS

Districts that want to improve incentives for teachers must pay careful attention to at least three issues:

1. selecting a plan that meets the major needs of the district and that has the support of those who will be affected by it;

2. developing the approach carefully so that financial and administrative pitfalls can be avoided; and

3. providing sufficient resources for implementation of the plan so that the necessary administrative supports are available.

Any plan must be based on a consensus about the particular school district's major needs, problems, and goals if it is to garner and retain support. Several other considerations are crucial to the success of any plan. As Hatry and Greiner (1984) stress:

> Successfully introducing teacher incentive plans, whether monetary or non-monetary, is a complex and difficult undertaking. The many elements involved in a plan's design and implementation all need to be handled well or the plan can become of little use—or even counterproductive (p. 1).

They stress three features: (a) teacher participation, (b) a fair and objective teacher evaluation process, and (c) the ability to provide significant awards to all teachers who deserve them (i.e., no quotas). All of the research emphasizes the importance of teacher participation in the development of a teacher incentive plan, but as Hatry and Greiner note, "this [condition] is frequently violated by school districts wanting to move quickly to introduce a merit pay plan" (p. 2). The result is likely to be fatal to the survival of a plan. Insufficient time for development also creates other problems, particularly with respect to the development of appropriate teacher evaluation procedures and the training of those involved in evaluation and implementation of the plan.

Teacher Evaluation

Because teacher evaluation is so central to the implementation of a merit pay plan, a special note is warranted here. The type of teacher evaluation process needed to make important personnel decisions affecting tenure, salaries, or promotions is different from that typically used by school districts for general monitoring and improvement purposes. Evaluation for personnel decisions must have a high degree of

reliability and validity. This means that multiple samples of teaching performance must be used and that evaluators must be highly competent in both evaluation techniques and their knowledge and application of pedagogical principles (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Wise et al., 1984). For reasons of objectivity, such decisions also generally require multiple evaluators.

Most districts' teacher evaluation practices are ineffectual for making important personnel decisions because they rely on untrained evaluators who do not have sufficient time to conduct and adequately document evaluations. Furthermore, the validity of an evaluation process depends on the purposes for which it will be used. A process that is appropriate for one purpose may be inappropriate for another. In the case of judgments about teaching excellence, different criteria and more expert evaluators are required than would be used for making judgments of minimal competence (Wise et al., 1984).

Reviews of research on teacher evaluation point to several prerequisites for evaluation that can sustain merit pay or other personnel decisions (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Natriello and Dornbusch, 1981; Fuller et al., 1982; Wise et al., 1984; Hatry and Greiner, 1984):

- Evaluators must have sufficient time, unfettered by competing administrative demands, for evaluation activities. This may mean assigning staff other than (or in addition to) the school principal to some evaluation functions.
- Evaluators must be trained in evaluation techniques, and the quality of their evaluation activities must be regularly monitored by higher authorities.
- Evaluators must have sufficient pedagogical expertise to adequately judge the competence of others.
- Teachers should have input into evaluation criteria and should have opportunities for frequent communication and feedback with evaluators.
- Data on teacher performance should be derived from a number of sources, since no single source (supervisory ratings, peer ratings, student test scores, achievement of pre-set targets, self-evaluation, or parent or student ratings) has been shown to have sufficient reliability and validity to sustain judgments of teacher competence.[3]

Summary

Teacher incentive plans come in many forms which have different purposes and potential pitfalls. Merit pay plans focus on recognizing and rewarding teaching performance with financial incentives. Master teacher plans also recognize and reward excellent teachers, while also providing opportunities for professional growth. Incentive pay plans strive to influence the supply, turnover, and distribution of teachers with less emphasis on the quality of teacher performance. Non-salary incentives are another means for recognizing teachers' efforts and for encouraging the development and dissemination of promising teaching practices.

Many districts have used a combination of these approaches in trying to develop a system of teacher incentives that will meet their particular needs. All of the approaches require careful planning, attention to evaluation and selection processes, and involvement of teachers in design and implementation. For a

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[3]Surprisingly, supervisors' ratings of teachers have generally been found to lack interrater reliability and validity (Medley, 1982; Peterson and Kauchak, 1982), while student ratings have a rather high degree of reliability (Peterson and Kauchak, 1982). The reliability of student test scores as a measure of teaching effectiveness is consistently quite low (Brophy, 1973; Rosenshine, 1970; Shavelson and Russo, 1977; Veldman and Brophy, 1974). Hatry and Greiner (1984) point particularly to the inadequacy of student achievement tests for helping to evaluate teacher performance, due to deficiencies in content, subjects covered, grade levels covered, and the coverage of both lower order and higher order cognitive skills (p. 4).

teacher incentive plan to be successful, it must meet these conditions and must be responsive to the unique problems and circumstances of the particular school district. The next section describes the particular teaching policies and conditions that provide the context for shaping an incentive plan for the D.C. Public Schools.

III. D.C. STUDY FINDINGS

This study of D.C. teaching conditions and policies included research on the characteristics of the D.C. teaching force and trends in recruitment and retention; salaries and other financial incentives; non-salary incentives and opportunities for professional development; practices related to certification, training, and evaluation of teachers; and a survey of teachers' and principals' views of existing and proposed incentives. The major findings of the study are reported in this section. A separate volume includes a more detailed description of study methods and results.

TEACHING FORCE CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Analysis of the DCPS teaching force revealed some startling and dramatic trends that should have a profound impact on personnel policies over the next decade. Because of declining enrollments and large reductions in force during the late 1970s and early 1980s, a large proportion of the D.C. teaching force will reach retirement age over the next few years, and new teachers will have to be hired in much greater numbers than has been the case over the past two decades.

- The teaching force in D.C. is highly experienced and highly educated. Most (52%) current teachers have 15 or more years of experience, and two-thirds (67%) have at least a master's degree. The education and experience levels of D.C.teachers have increased substantially since 1980 when reductions in force disproportionately affected teachers with less experience and fewer advanced degrees.

- The size of the teaching force decreased dramatically (by nearly 20%) between 1980 and 1981, but has remained fairly stable since then. Given current demographic trends in D.C. (a slightly increasing birthrate and increased enrollments at the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten levels), the size of the teaching force should probably remain stable over the next five years and begin to increase after that time. The convergence of these demographic and teacher retirement trends will create a substantial demand for new teachers in the D.C. Public Schools.

- About 27 percent of the current teaching force are aged 50 or above; only 3 percent are under 30 years old. Of the 1600 teachers and other ET-15 personnel who are aged 50 or above, about three-quarters will retire over the next ten years, given current retirement patterns. By 1993, the 50-59 age group will be more than double its current size and will comprise about half the teaching force, leading to a second wave of retirements throughout the remainder of that decade. About 100 teachers will retire each year between now and 1988, increasing to about 150 teachers annually for the next five years, and at least 175 per year after 1993.

- Certain teaching and service areas will be disproportionately affected by pending retirements. The first wave of retirements (over the next five years) will affect elementary education, vocational education, reading, foreign language, counseling, and library services. Two-thirds of the retirees will be in these areas; 40% will be in elementary education alone. The second wave of retirements will affect physical education and health, mathematics, and social studies, in addition to the areas already listed.

Since the 1980 reductions in force, D.C. has not had much turnover in the teaching force. However, there are some signs of latent shortages that suggest potential supply or recruitment problems in future years.

- Since 1981, DCPS has hired about 300 teachers annually (about 6% of the total teaching force). However, almost three-quarters of these new appointments are temporary appointments. (Temporary appointments are for one year only. The category of temporary employees includes

teachers who lack more than 9 credits toward their area of certification as well as some teachers who were rehired after the reductions in force.)

- Teaching areas with high levels of temporary appointees are foreign language, music, special education, science, and math. These disciplines accounted for most of the new temporary appointments in 1983, and these temporary employees account for 7 to 14 percent of the total teaching force in each of these areas. (These areas are also nationwide teacher shortage areas.) It is possible that these temporary appointment trends represent teaching areas in which the district has difficulty finding fully certified candidates.[1]

- Attrition rates have matched hiring rates in recent years. Teaching areas with higher than average attrition rates are the same as those with higher than average levels of temporary employees. Teachers with advanced degrees are disproportionately represented among those who are retiring or resigning from the system.

SALARIES AND OTHER FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Analysis of salaries and other financial incentives in DCPS as compared to other surrounding school districts indicates that D.C. teaching salaries are fairly competitive, but other financial incentives are less available.

- As compared to surrounding local districts, D.C. Public School teachers have high starting salaries. D.C. is ranked #1 in the area, with starting salaries for beginning teachers with a bachelor's degree of $17,167 in 1983-84. Starting salaries in D.C. also rank highly as compared to starting salaries in other major urban districts across the country.

- Average salaries for D.C. teachers are also high (about $30,000), largely because D.C. has a highly experienced and highly educated teaching force.

- However, D.C. teachers' salaries fall behind those of several neighboring districts for experienced teachers with advanced degrees. For example, maximum salaries for D.C. teachers with master's degrees or above rank fifth out of eight local districts. Step increases and increases for advanced degrees lag behind those of most neighboring districts.

- Although all of the other surrounding school districts offer additional stipends to teachers for academic and athletic extracurricular activities, D.C. offers an additional stipend only to athletic coaches.[2]

- In contrast to most of the other surrounding school systems, D.C. has no paid differentiated staff positions such as teacher specialists, teacher coordinators, or department chairpersons. Most of the other surrounding districts involve from 5 to 15 percent of their teachers in differentiated staff roles which offer extra pay and opportunities for enhanced professional responsibilities.

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[1] In the teacher survey, fairly substantial proportions of secondary school teachers reported that they were teaching subject areas for which they were not fully certified. At least one-quarter of those teaching English, reading, math, social studies, and science reported that they were not certified in the area. Overall, about one-third of the respondents reported doing some teaching outside of their area of certification, and 15 percent reported spending more than 10 percent of their time doing so.

[2] Student government advisors may receive an additional stipend in D.C. Stipends for other extracurricular activities may be negotiated between a principal and an employee, but no compensation is guaranteed. Respondents to the teacher survey indicated that, of the 42% of teachers who participate in extracurricular activities, more than 95% do so without any additional compensation. Of the 5.8% who participate in coaching activities, about 40% are compensated for this work.

- The single largest opportunity for additional pay available to D.C. teachers is the category of "wages as earned" (WAE) positions for extended day, evening, or summer school programs. These are primarily in the areas of adult, continuing, and career education. In FY 1983 WAE payments amounted to $3.9 million.

Because of the large turnover expected in D.C. over the next five to 10 years, it is important to consider the relative competitiveness of teaching salaries with those of other alternative occupations that potential recruits might consider. Estimates suggest that in D.C., as elsewhere, starting salaries for teachers fall below those of other occupations requiring a bachelor's degree.

- In FY 1982, starting salaries for teachers in D.C. were $15,895. In that same year, average starting salaries nationwide for college graduates in other occupations ranged from $15,000 for a B.A. in home economics to $25,000 for a B.S. in engineering (CPC, 1983). Salaries in D.C. are typically higher than the national average. Assuming comparable inflation rates across occupations, D.C. teachers' salaries, though more competitive than those of most districts, probably still lag behind starting salaries in other occupations.

NON-SALARY INCENTIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A number of relatively small awards programs currently operate in the D.C. Public Schools. Most are supported by funds from outside the school system, the number of awards ranges from one to 50 per program and the monetary amounts range from $50 to $2000 per awardee. Some of these awards are for outstanding performance; others are for the conduct of innovative projects or practices.[3]

Although many teachers are not aware of these awards programs (about a third of our survey respondents), those who are aware of the programs are generally favorable about them. Principals are even more supportive.

- More than 40 percent of teacher respondents felt the awards programs were at least somewhat useful for encouraging improved teaching. They expressed strongest support for the Superintendent's Incentive Awards (for promising practices developed by teachers), the National Teacher of the Year Award, and the Washington Post Grants in Education Program (for conducting innovative projects proposed by teachers).

- Principals were more aware of the awards programs, and more than 75 percent felt they were at least somewhat useful for encouraging improved teaching. They expressed strongest support for the Superintendent's Incentive Awards and the School Incentive Staff Development Awards (for implementing innovative projects proposed by individuals or groups of teachers).

Other types of non-salary incentives are opportunities for sabbaticals and for professional development courses. DCPS offers some modest opportunities in these areas.

- DCPS offers sabbaticals which pay one-half of the teacher's salary, but only for teachers pursuing coursework in mathematics, science, or computer technology. Seventeen teachers were involved in this sabbatic program in FY 1983. D.C. also pays tuition for teachers taking courses to become certified in math. Thirty-five teachers were involved in such courses in 1983. Over the past five years, only 43 D.C. teachers received other types of leave with pay (33 were prior to 1981).

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[3]Awards that recognize individual teachers are the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award, the National Teacher of the Year Award, the Superintendent's Teacher Incentive Awards (for "promising practices"), and the Ward 2 Incentive Awards. Awards to conduct innovative projects are the Washington Post Mini-Grants in Education and the School Incentive Staff Development Program. Individuals, groups, or entire faculties may apply for project grants. School recognition awards include the U.S. Department of Education's Secondary School Recognition Program, in which D.C. participated last year.

- DCPS also offers inservice courses and arranges with local universities for reduced-cost, graduate credit courses. Responses to the teacher survey indicate that 80 percent of the teachers participated in inservice courses and 60 percent in college coursework related to education this year. About half participated in educational conferences and workshops. About 30 percent of respondents indicated they would like more opportunities to engage in these kinds of professional development activities.

A third type of non-salary incentive is the opportunity to assume new and challenging responsibilities. Although D.C. does not have any differentiated teaching positions which offer additional stipends, some types of teachers have slightly different responsibilities. These include subject area and building resource teachers, junior high transition team teachers, department chairpersons at the secondary level, and CBC (competency-based curriculum) chairpersons at the elementary level.

- Roles for these "differentiated" positions are largely defined at the local school level. Sometimes these teachers have released time or a reduced teaching load to allow them to provide instructional assistance to other teachers, but generally this is not the case. Resource teachers and transition teachers were once viewed as providing services to other teachers as well as students; now they primarily work directly with small groups of students who need extra assistance. A peer advisor program which was designed to provide instructional support to teachers is no longer operational.

- Nonetheless, these types of positions are viewed as attractive by many teachers who occupy them and they seem to provide a type of incentive for experienced teachers. (Resource teachers and transition teachers are more experienced and more highly educated than most other teachers.) The primary attractions of these positions are their enhanced professional responsibility, opportunities to give help to other teachers and to have contact with more teachers in the school, increased flexibility, training opportunities, and enhanced working conditions (e.g., smaller classes, reduced teaching load, or fewer extra duties).

CERTIFICATION, TRAINING, AND EVALUATION PRACTICES

In any school district, personnel practices designed to select, sort, and support the staff come in many forms. These practices include certification and hiring, ongoing training and staff development, evaluation, and promotion or recognition. D.C. Public Schools' practices in these areas are like those of many other school systems. In general, current practices do little to differentiate among staff or to provide special forms of assistance or recognition. As recruitment, selection, and retention of teachers become more pressing concerns in coming years, some changes in current practices may be warranted.

- Certification of teachers in DCPS is based on completion of required coursework in an accredited higher education institution. A proposal for requiring subject area tests for licensure is under consideration. Hiring is based on certification standards supplemented by a review of academic qualifications, recommendations, and an interview.[4]

- Based on the results of the teacher and principal surveys, there is substantial support among both groups for certain changes in certification requirements for new teachers. More than 70% of respondent teachers felt that an internship under the supervision of an experienced teacher should be required for initial certification; more than 80% of respondent principals endorsed such a requirement. More than half of respondent teachers (and 85% of the respondent principals) felt that a written test of subject matter knowledge should be required.

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[4]At least 20 states and many school districts now require some kind of test for teacher certification and/or hiring. Some states and school districts have also initiated a supervised internship for first-year teachers as a prerequisite for permanent certification.

- Recertification is based on the completion of at least six credit hours of additional coursework every five years. Starting this year, at least three of those hours are to be in the area of computer literacy. Beyond this requirement, ongoing teacher training involves participation in inservice activities or voluntary participation in other courses. As noted earlier, most teachers participate in these activities.

- Most teachers who responded to the teacher survey expressed satisfaction with their professional growth opportunities. Their areas of dissatisfaction were related to their relative isolation from other teachers. Most felt they had insufficient time to interact with other professionals about teaching practices, and substantial proportions wanted more opportunities to observe other classrooms (44%) and to meet with other teachers to share problems and ideas (48%).

The district's teacher appraisal process (TAP) is the major tool in the district for monitoring and rating teachers and for providing individual assistance to those who need it. A new version of TAP was piloted this year in one region of the district. TAP was not designed for the purpose of making salary or promotion decisions. However, ratings are used to protect teachers from reductions in force (an "outstanding" rating adds seniority points in the event of RIF decisions) and to determine salary increases for teachers at step 6 of the salary scale (a better than satisfactory rating is required to move to step 7).

As currently designed and implemented TAP is not suitable for making merit pay or other teacher recognition decisions. Its utility for other types of personnel decisions and for teacher assistance or improvement is also limited by lack of resources.

- TAP is generally not viewed as highly reliable by administrators or teachers. It does not differentially sort teachers or identify those who need assistance. In 1983, 72% of all teachers were rated "outstanding" or "very good"; 99.8% were rated "satisfactory" or better. Only nine teachers received "conditional" ratings, and one received "unsatisfactory."

- Although most teachers (70%) feel that their performance rating accurately reflected their teaching performance, a majority do not feel the evaluation process fairly rates all teachers or helps them to improve their teaching.

- TAP is considered more helpful for improvement by elementary than by secondary school teachers. The new process is viewed as less cumbersome and potentially more helpful by those in the pilot region.

- Although teachers who receive a less than satisfactory rating are supposed to receive extra assistance from a support person of their choice, the support process is largely non-functional. The support process is not used because support persons have no released time to offer assistance, they are not selected for their particular expertise, and they lack a clearly defined role.

- Principals cite as the greatest obstacles to effective evaluation an overload of principal responsibilities, the subjectivity inherent in the process, and the absence of a viable support process for teachers needing extra assistance.

- Neither principals nor teachers feel that the current evaluation process should be used to designate outstanding teachers for special recognition. (Nearly two-thirds of both groups disagree with the use of the current process for this purpose.)

TEACHERS' AND PRINCIPALS' VIEWS OF INCENTIVES

As part of the study, two surveys were conducted. One survey was sent to all teachers and other ET-15 personnel in the district. The other survey was sent to all principals and other school-level administrators in the district. Completed surveys were returned by 2564 teachers and other ET-15

personnel and by 144 principals and other school-level administrators. Respondents were asked their views of existing incentives and of proposed incentive plans. Some of the results of the surveys were reported in earlier sections of this chapter. Other major findings regarding teacher satisfaction and views of incentives are reported below.

D.C. teachers express satisfaction with most areas of their work, although their general satisfaction with their choice of teaching as an occupation (like that of teachers nationally) is not high. Particular subgroups of teachers are more dissatisfied than others.

- Overall, most D.C. teachers are satisfied with the following aspects of their work: relationships with other teachers (86%); relationships with administrators (75%); their degree of autonomy (72%); relationships with parents (68%); opportunities for professional growth (66%); salaries (61%); job security (60%); school organization (57%); and class size (55%).

- D.C. teachers are most dissatisfied with the following aspects of their work: public attitudes toward schools (81%); student attitudes toward learning (68%); student behavior and discipline (66%); opportunities for interaction with other professionals (60%); non-instructional duties (56%); and preparation time (56%). Teachers are about evenly split regarding their satisfaction with support services for teachers and physical facilities.

- Most teachers responded favorably to questions about the climate and working conditions in their particular schools, but most felt that materials and equipment were not available as needed, that there were no opportunities for professional advancement, and that morale was low.

- Despite general satisfaction with particular aspects of their work, teachers in D.C. are evenly split as to whether they would re-enter the teaching profession if they had the choice, with 42% saying they would and 42% saying they would not. Those who would not teach again are more dissatisfied with particular aspects of their work, especially salaries. They are also more likely to say they would leave teaching for a job that offered more money. Among those who say they would not teach again, those with advanced degrees are overrepresented, as are junior high school teachers, counselors, school psychologists and social workers.

- Teachers who say they would not choose teaching again are also much less likely to say they plan to stay in teaching. Of the survey respondents, 54% say they will stay until they are eligible or required to retire, 8% plan to leave as soon as possible, 15% will stay until something better comes along, and 23% are undecided.

- In general, principals are somewhat more satisfied with particular aspects of their jobs than teachers, but fewer plan to stay in their current job until retirement (35%). Their areas of dissatisfaction mirror those of teachers, with more than a third dissatisfied with physical facilities, support services, public attitudes, student attitudes, and student behavior.

As mentioned earlier, both teachers and principals expressed general support for the incentive plans currently operating in the district. The two groups also voiced similar views of potential new incentive plans for teachers, with most favoring a master teacher or career ladder plan.

- Teachers strongly favored the concept of a career ladder plan (62%) and a master teacher plan (59%). A slight majority (52%) also voiced support for an incentive pay plan. However, teachers disapproved of the concept of a school-based merit pay plan (69%) or an individual teacher merit pay plan (71%).

- Principals voiced very strong approval for the concept of a master teacher plan (88%) or a career ladder plan (82%). A slight majority approved of a teacher merit pay plan (56%) or an incentive pay plan (50.4%). However, principals disapproved of the concept of a school-based merit pay plan for

teachers (54%). In general, principals also supported the idea of a merit pay plan for themselves but were less positive about a school-based merit pay plan for principals.

- When asked to choose among the various types of teacher incentive plans in terms of which should be adopted by the D.C. Public Schools, teachers' and principals' rankings remained virtually the same as their approval rankings. However, 28% of teachers and 13% of principals said they would vote for none of the plans.

When asked how teachers should be selected for recognition in the context of a teacher incentive plan, both teachers and principals felt that a new evaluation process should be developed for this purpose involving many indicators and sources of evidence about teacher performance.

- Teacher approval for various selection processes was expressed as follows: a new evaluation process (39%); vote of teachers and others (17%); the current evaluation process (11%); selection by a district-wide committee (11%); and selection by school-based committees (8%). Thirteen percent of the teachers proposed some other approach. Principals voted as follows: a new evaluation process (56%); selection by a district-wide committee (23%); selection by school-based committees (11%); vote of teachers and others (7%); the current teacher evaluation process (2%); and some other approach (2%).

- When asked who would be involved in the selection process, teachers voiced strongest support for the involvement of expert, experienced teachers from outside the school and for the involvement of school principals. They voiced mixed support for the involvement of subject area supervisors or department chairpersons, and a decided lack of support for the involvement of regional or central office administrators. Principals voiced strongest support for the involvement of principals, of supervisors or expert teachers from outside the school, and of regional or central office administrators. They voiced mixed support for the involvement of in-school teachers or supervisors, and a decided lack of support for the involvement of department chairpersons.

- When asked what indicators of teacher performance should be used to select teachers for special recognition, teachers voiced strongest support for the use of annual performance ratings, special observations of classroom performance, evidence of extra effort, teacher and administrator recommendations, and teacher self-evaluations. They had mixed views about the use of student or parent ratings, and they were decidedly opposed to the use of students' standardized test scores as indicators of teacher performance. Principals strongly favored the use of annual performance ratings, administrator recommendations, special classroom observations, evidence of extra effort, and indicators of student performance *other* than standardized test scores. They were decidedly less favorable about the use of student test scores, teacher recommendations or self-evaluations, and parent or student ratings.

- Teachers and principals voiced strong support for a number of criteria to be used in selection, including subject matter knowledge, classroom management and teaching skills, innovation in teaching strategies, professional self-development, conduct of professional responsibilities, and human relations skills. Both groups felt that experience and education levels should be much less important than these other criteria.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

The study findings point to several teaching policy areas that are worthy of particular attention in the D.C. Public Schools. First, the pending wave of retirements (combined with evidence of current and future teacher shortages) suggests that attention should be paid to the recruitment, training, and induction of new teachers. The large influx of new teachers could be problematic if shortages of qualified teachers continue and if adequate screening and support systems for new teachers are not put into place. On the other hand, this turnover will provide a new opportunity for developing a teacher incentive system

that offers recognition and professional development incentives to both new and experienced teachers in the D.C. Public Schools.

Second, financial and other incentives for experienced teachers are particularly lacking in DCPS as compared to many other school systems. Although beginning salaries are relatively high, salary ceilings for highly experienced teachers and those with advanced degrees are lower than many surrounding districts. Furthermore, there are few opportunities for experienced teachers to assume differentiated responsibilities or to qualify for additional stipends or rewards. Teachers in D.C. are most in favor of incentives that would offer opportunities for enhanced professional rewards, such as differentiated roles for expert, experienced teachers; opportunities to develop and disseminate exemplary teaching practices; and opportunities to acquire new ideas and skills through sabbaticals, conference attendance, and increased interactions with other teachers. Thus, incentives that both *recognize and better utilize* the talents of highly competent teachers seem most desirable.

Both teachers and principals in the D.C. Public Schools strongly support the existing awards programs that provide recognition and incentives for teachers to develop and implement innovative teaching ideas. These include the Superintendent's Teacher Incentive Awards, the School Improvement Staff Development Awards, and the Washington Post Grants in Education Awards. Furthermore, both teachers and principals support the concepts of a master teacher and career ladder plan, in which financial rewards are tied to enhanced professional responsibilities. Their support suggests that these kinds of incentives ought to receive serious attention.

Finally, two kinds of changes in the evaluation and support systems for teachers seem warranted. With respect to the improvement and assistance functions of evaluation, there is a need for an improved support process for teachers who need additional assistance. This process should provide for intensive supervision by a teaching specialist for those who need extra help. For purposes of selecting and recognizing outstanding teachers as part of a new incentive system, a separate evaluation process should be designed. According to the evaluation literature and views of D.C. teachers and principals, this process would have heightened reliability and validity by incorporating multiple sources of data on teacher performance that are derived from the assessments of both administrators and other expert teachers.

IV. TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Having carefully considered the research on teacher incentives, merit pay plans, and DCPS teaching policies and conditions, the Superintendent's Task Force on Merit Pay for Teachers recommends several actions to enhance the recruitment, retention, and professional development of teachers in the D.C. Public Schools. These include both short-range and long-range proposals for changing the teacher incentive structure. The recommended implementation of these proposals is based on at least two prior assumptions or prerequisites:

- Funding for a new teacher incentive plan should be additional to the current (and otherwise proposed) budget of the D.C. Public Schools. Such funding should not substitute for the full and adequate funding of school programs, supportive services, or basic salaries.

- The adequate provision of basic teaching materials, supplies, and equipment to all teachers should be attained as a minimal condition for implementing other teaching improvements and incentives.

Given these conditions, the task force recommends the adoption and further development of two kinds of incentives for teachers in the D.C. Public Schools. The first category consists of career development incentives that reshape the compensation, training, and evaluation structures to better recognize, utilize, and support teachers' efforts at various stages in their careers. The second category consists of incentive awards programs that will recognize and reward the efforts of excellent teachers. Taken together, these recommendations provide a framework for a balanced and comprehensive system of teacher recognition that will offer both monetary and professional incentives for teacher attraction, retention, and professional self-development.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

1. A career ladder plan which links major salary increases to performance-based career advancement should be developed. The development of a career ladder for teachers should be considered a long-range goal of the school district to be fully implemented within the next five years. It would provide a comprehensive incentive structure for attracting, retaining, and motivating highly qualified teachers by reshaping the systems for teacher compensation, training, and evaluation. Such a plan would (1) identify distinct career stages with differential salary ranges and responsibilities for beginning teachers, career teachers, and senior or master teachers; (2) increase both beginning teachers' salaries and the range of salaries at each of the career advancement stages, making them competitive with salaries in other professional occupations; (3) provide for supervised internships of beginning teachers by senior or master teachers and for rigorous evaluation of experienced teachers at specified "promotion" points; and (4) provide enhanced opportunities for professional growth for all teachers and increased instructional leadership responsibilities for teachers at the upper rungs of the career ladder.[1]

Developmental planning and phased implementation of a comprehensive career ladder plan should take place with the participation of teachers and school-level administrators. This process should incorporate detailed financial planning, development of a model for monitoring and projecting teaching force trends, and development of an evaluation process appropriate for career advancement decisions, as well as development of the career ladder structure itself.

Although the development of a comprehensive career ladder plan for teachers is a long-range undertaking, there are two features of such an approach that can be developed immediately and implemented as soon as practicable. These are the development of a differentiated staff plan that allows

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[1]The most promising prototype of a career ladder plan is currently being implemented in Charlotte-Mecklenberg, North Carolina.

excellent teachers to provide assistance to other teachers, and the development of a plan for selecting and inducting new teachers that will provide more rigorous screening and more intensive support.

2. A differentiated staff plan that recognizes and utilizes the talents of expert, experienced teachers should be developed. This plan should be designed to meet district needs for training and assisting new teachers and those who need additional assistance. A new differentiated staff plan would (1) select highly competent teachers to provide instructional support to other teachers in their specialized teaching areas; (2) provide additional compensation to these teachers and released time of not more than 50% for this purpose; and (3) utilize a new selection process for identifying differentiated staff with multiple data sources to ensure fair and comprehensive assessments of applicants' capabilities.[2]

3. A new plan for selecting and inducting new teachers in the D.C. Public Schools should be developed to provide more rigorous screening and more intensive support. Because new teachers will comprise increasingly large proportions of the DCPS teaching force over the next decade, improvement of teacher quality will increasingly depend on the district's ability to recruit, select, and retain qualified new teachers. Recruitment of talented new entrants will likely require increases in teachers' salaries and development of other recruitment incentives. At the same time, however, it will be important to ensure that new entrants are knowledgeable in their subject areas and can translate that knowledge into effective classroom teaching performance. To that end, certification and/or selection practices should incorporate examinations of subject matter knowledge as a condition of hiring, and all new teachers should fulfill a one-year internship under the guidance of an expert, experienced teacher in their subject matter area. A rigorous evaluation of new teachers' performance should be conducted prior to tenure. Since attrition rates are highest for new teachers, the internship should provide the needed supports to enhance the training and retention of new entrants to the teaching force.

INCENTIVE AWARDS FOR TEACHERS

In addition to the career development incentives recommended above, the task force concludes that individual and group incentive awards that recognize the efforts and successes of outstanding teachers should be an integral part of the district's ongoing initiatives for professional development and school improvement. The task force recommends both individual teacher incentive awards and school incentive awards.

4. The Superintendent's Teacher Incentive Awards Program should be expanded. This program provides recognition for outstanding teaching and offers both financial and professional incentives for talented teachers. Expansion of the highly-regarded "promising practices" awards should (1) substantially increase the annual number of awards, (2) allow for applications from both individual teachers and groups of teachers, (3) provide cash awards and non-salary awards, such as sabbaticals, conference attendance, and materials for special projects, and (4) establish a mechanism for the replication, adaptation, and dissemination of award-winning practices by arranging for award recipients to offer workshops, demonstrations, and other assistance to teachers who wish to adopt the practices.[3]

5. A school incentive award program should be developed to recognize and encourage the school improvement efforts of teachers and administrators. Such a program would be designed to promote and reward collegial improvement efforts and cooperation in achieving school goals by all school staff. The development of a new program to achieve these goals should be considered a long-range objective (3-5 years) of the school system. Several school award models should be considered: awards based on inter-school competition for attaining systemwide goals, awards based on individual school improvement in attaining systemwide goals, and awards based on school attainment of goals set by school staff

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[2]Prototypes for developing a differentiated staff plan of this type would be California's "mentor teacher" program and Toledo's "consulting teacher" plan.

[3]One prototype for an expanded incentive awards program would be the successful Impact II program in New York City and Houston.

themselves. Awards may take the form of discretionary money allocated to the school to be spent as staff decide and/or cash awards to school personnel.

Developmental planning and phased implementation of a school incentive award program should include a comprehensive study of the experiences of other districts that have implemented such plans,[4] and careful development of criteria for awards that will promote healthy cooperation, teacher and principal morale, and district equity goals, as well as important learning goals. The planning process should also focus on the development of a carefully-designed selection process and an adequate financial plan for implementation.

CONTINUED PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The task force recommends that continued development of each of these recommendations be conducted by planning committees consisting primarily of teachers and school-level administrators during the summer months of 1984 and throughout the 1984-85 school year. The planning process will include periodic review by the current task force.

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[4]Districts that have recently initiated school incentive award programs include Dallas, Texas; Richmond, Virginia; and Houston, Texas, among others.

Appendix A

Superintendent's Task Force on Merit Pay for Teachers

1983-84 Meeting Agenda Summary

November 30, 1983

- Overview of merit pay and teacher incentive plans
- Outline planning process
- Development of the plan for planning

December 14, 1983

- Merit pay study goals
- Planning approaches
  1. Merit Award Plan: Richmond, Virginia
  2. Performance-Based Incentive Pay System: Fairfax County, Virginia
- Study objectives
- Review plan for planning
- Identify briefing resources

January 4, 1984

- Briefing on merit pay enabling legislation
- Briefing on Effective Teacher Evaluation
- Status of teacher profile data

January 25, 1984

- Briefing on Tennessee Plan
  1. Review of the research on teacher evaluation and reward systems
  2. Technical considerations in teacher evaluation
  3. Evaluation in a school context
  4. Considerations in changing evaluation practices
  5. Processes for development of an evaluation and reward system
  6. Issues germane to DCPS and teacher incentives

February 22, 1984

- Briefings on DCPS studies:
  1. Teacher Profile
  2. Teacher Incentives
  3. Teacher Salaries
- Reviews of goals and objectives
- Identify major problems and possible solutions for attracting, retaining, and motivating teachers
- Determine Task Force process for examining possible solutions

March 7, 1984

- Briefing on Charlotte-Mecklenberg School District Plan

March 28, 1984

- Briefing on Rand Study on Effective Teacher Evaluation
- Briefing on DCPS Teacher Evaluation and Reward System

April 11, 1984

- Briefing on DCPS study findings
- Briefings on the Richmond School Incentive Program
- Pros and cons of teacher incentive plans

April 18, 1984

- Briefing on IBM model to attract, retain, and motivate high calibre staff
- Briefing on DCPS Teacher/Administrator Survey

April 24, 1984 — *Merit Pay Task Force Conference*

- Discussion: school incentive plan, teacher incentive plan, and differentiated staffing/career ladder plan
- Buzz Sessions: analyze study reports and implications to determine whether the proposed plans meet the stated goals
- Develop recommendations
- Develop long and short range objectives supporting recommendations:
  — action plan
  — timetable

May 2, 1984

- Written comments on *A Study of Merit Pay for the District of Columbia Public Schools*
- Review comments and/or revise April 24, 1984 Task Force recommendations

May 15, 1984 — *Final Task Force Meeting*

- Reactions/comments on Task Force recommendations and sign-off
- Development of guidelines for planning committees:
  1. Career Ladder Plan
  2. Differentiated Staff Plan
  3. Plan for Selecting and Inducting New Teachers
  4. Teacher Incentive Awards Program
  5. School Incentive Award Program
- Videotape of Impact II Teacher Incentive Award Program, New York City Public Schools

Appendix B

Summary Analysis of Teacher Incentive Plans

INDIVIDUAL TEACHER INCENTIVE AWARDS

Traditional Merit Pay Bonus Awards

Rationale: Recognizing outstanding teachers encourages excellence and helps retain high quality teachers.

Pros:

- Public recognition of outstanding teachers, if it is the result of a selection process that teachers feel is fair and accurate, may boost morale by letting teachers know they are appreciated.
- The publicity accompanying merit pay awards may help increase public confidence in the schools by stimulating positive perceptions of teachers.
- Merit pay bonuses may inspire teachers to work harder to earn the additional pay and recognition.

Cons:

- There is little evidence that money, by itself, is a primary motivator of teachers.
- There is little evidence that teachers who do not receive merit pay are inspired to greater effort by the existence of a merit pay program.
- Traditional merit pay bonus awards sometimes cause competition rather than cooperation among teachers, particularly when there is a quota on the number of awards to be given.
- Teachers may receive an award one year and not the next, thus the long-term value of the monetary incentive is lessened. If the same teachers continue to receive the awards, the incentive value for other teachers is lessened.
- Most teacher evaluation systems cannot sustain merit pay decisions without substantial infusions of resources in the form of evaluator training, development of new processes, and an increase in the number of evaluators.
- Administrative difficulties, evaluation problems, and morale problems have led to the demise of most merit pay plans.

Conditions for effective implementation: Merit pay programs that have survived have had the following characteristics:

1. Most teachers receive awards (although the amounts per teacher may vary).
2. Performance evaluation (i.e., the teacher evaluation rating) is a small part of the overall determination; many other criteria are used.
3. Selection is made using a carefully designed, comprehensive process that uses multiple sources of input and multiple evaluators.

4. Base teachers salaries are already professionally competitive; funding for basic salaries, improved evaluation, and merit awards is consistent and plentiful.

5. Teachers are heavily involved in both the design and implementation of the merit pay system.

Traditional merit pay bonus awards have been successful (at least as judged by survival) in only a few small, wealthy school districts.

Promising Practices Awards

Rationale: Awards for the development and dissemination of "promising practices" encourage teacher innovation and reward extra effort.

Pros:

- Awards for the development of exemplary practices not only provide recognition for good teachers, but also provide recognition of innovative approaches to send a message that the district values creative teaching efforts.

- If award recipients are given support to disseminate their work, the program can both recognize good teachers and encourage the improvement of teaching practices in other schools and classrooms.

- Awards can take the form of personal bonuses, money to implement program ideas, and/or released time for recipients to conduct demonstrations or inservice workshops. Thus the awards can provide both the monetary and non-monetary incentives important to teachers.

- "Promising practices" awards are easier to administer than merit pay bonus awards because evaluations of program ideas are easier to conduct with agreed-upon criteria than annual evaluations of all teachers.

- Awards can be made to individual teachers or groups of teachers, thus reducing the emphasis on competition that is inherent in other merit pay approaches.

- Such awards do not explicitly divide teachers into "meritorious" and "nonmeritorious" groups; thus, they are not as potentially divisive or morale-threatening as merit pay bonus designations.

- Public recognition of outstanding prctices may boost public confidence in the schools by providing information about positive efforts that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Cons:

- "Promising practices" awards do not necessarily recognize all outstanding teachers, since they are by application for specific program efforts.

- Teachers may apply for and/or receive an award one year and not the next; thus the awards may not provide long-term incentives for particular individual teachers, except to the extent that the experience enhances their professional development.

Conditions for Effective Implementation: Where such programs have been successfully implemented (e.g., the Impact II program in New York City and Houston), the following conditions have contributed to program effectiveness:

1. A sizable number of awards are offered each year so that teacher interest is stimulated and

recognition of good teachers is visible. For example, in New York about 300 teachers per year receive awards.

2. A primary emphasis of the program is "teacher-to-teacher contact." Thus the program includes several kinds of support. Most winning teachers conduct workshops and demonstrations; selected programs are listed in a catalog or are available on videotape; teachers who want to adopt an idea can apply for grants to apply the techniques in their own classrooms; and winners can use some released time to work on dissemination and assisting other teachers.

3. Awards include both monetary grants and other professional growth incentives such as those listed above and opportunities to attend conferences, etc.

4. The programs have developed methods for keeping previous winning teachers involved as well as for continuing to recognize other teachers' efforts.

Differentiated Staff Plans

Rationale: Retention of highly qualified teachers is enhanced by offering both financial rewards and opportunities for increased professional responsibilities.

Pros:

- Creating a cadre of "master" teachers (often called mentor teachers, teacher leaders, or consulting teachers) provides recognition for expert, experienced teachers while also allowing them new professional growth opportunities.
- "Master" teachers can use released time to provide effective, continuous assistance to new teachers and teachers who need additional help, thus improving the quality of instruction in other classrooms and schools.
- Districts that use expert teachers as support persons in their teacher evaluation processes tend to have more effective evaluation overall, because administrator overload is lessened and concrete mechanisms exist for providing help when the need is identified.
- The financial and professional incentives provided by "master teacher" status are more stable than those accompanying an annual determination of a merit pay bonus.
- Public support for education may be increased by recognition of excellent teachers and by evidence that their talents are used to improve teacher evaluation and instruction.
- Differentiated staff plans have been successful in many districts because they do not create staff divisiveness, they provide concrete benefits for instruction, and they are not as difficult to administer as traditional merit pay plans.

Cons:

- Differentiated staff plans do not necessarily recognize all excellent teachers because the number of teachers selected is usually based on the need for instructional support (e.g., the number of new teachers to be supervised) and because not all good teachers want additional responsibilities.
- Differentiated staff may become quasi-administrators unless their duties are carefully defined to include only teacher assistance functions and their time is protected for these functions.
- Differentiated staff plans may remove good teachers from the classroom unless program is devised to ensure that a substantial portion of their time (e.g., 60 percent) is spent teaching.

Conditions for Effective Implementation:

1. Differentiated staff must have a clearly defined role or function, and released time must be commensurate with the scope of duties so that they will have adequate time to assist other teachers and will not be asked to assume other administrative chores. (Some districts determine the amount of released time or additional contract time based on the number of new teachers or experienced teachers to be assisted by the differentiated staff member.)
2. The selection process for differentiated staff must be careful and thorough. Many districts use a panel of teachers and administrators who review all applications for differentiated staff positions. Multiple criteria are used including teaching performance, interpersonal skills, and leadership

abilities. Peer recommendations are often used. Great attention must be paid to the composition of the panel and to development of a process that ensures fair application of criteria.

3. An oversight mechanism should be developed to ensure that differentiated staff resources are applied where they are most needed; that staff are adequately trained for their responsibilities and are able to carry them out effectively; and that assignments make optimal use of differentiated staff members' skills. Often a panel of teachers and administrators convenes several times a year to review the implementation of the differentiated staff program. Sometimes an administrative office assumes this responsibility.

4. Appointments are generally for two to three years. This provides a check on selection decisions (a means for ensuring that the best teachers continue in the role). It also allows more teachers over time to assume differentiated staff roles.

Career Ladder Plans

Rationale: Creating a career ladder for teachers (a series of evaluation and promotion points with significant salary hikes) provides longer-term incentives for teacher growth and development over the course of an entire teaching career, thereby enhancing the retention of highly qualified teachers.

Pros:

- Career ladder plans provide significant, long-term incentives for teachers by providing substantial salary increases tied to specific promotion points on a career advancement ladder. Teachers can obtain higher salaries and status without leaving the classroom for administrative posts.

- Career ladders provide both monetary and non-monetary incentives. As teachers are promoted to higher steps on the career ladder, they assume new responsibilities for improving instructional quality that enhance their own professional growth and that of other teachers as well.

- Career ladders should enhance quality control of teaching by providing more rigorous evaluation of teachers at several points in their careers, offering more supervision of beginning teachers (by senior teachers), and signalling needs for teacher assistance when a teacher is not promoted.

- Career ladders are intended to professionalize the teaching occupation by building a system of professional recognition and responsibilities in which teachers have more control over instructional activities and induction into the profession, as is the case in other professions.

Cons:

- Career ladders may produce a hierarchy of quasi-administrators if teacher responsibilities at subsequent steps of the ladder are not carefully defined.

- Career ladder plans are expensive to implement because they entail substantially higher salaries, particularly at the upper end of the salary scale, and because they require investment in new evaluation processes.

Conditions for Effective Implementation: No state or district has yet actually implemented a full-fledged career ladder plan, although several models have been proposed and some implementation attempts (e.g. in Tennessee and in Charlotte-Mecklenberg) will begin next year. Based on the research that has been done in developing career ladder plans, several conditions for effective implementation seem particularly important:

1. A commitment for sufficient, sustained funding of the plan must be established before implementation begins. Cost projections must be developed based on teaching force trends and the changes in resource allocations for support functions implicit in a career ladder approach.

2. Since a career ladder involves major restructuring of the teaching occupation and has many implications for virtually all personnel functions, the design and implementation of a plan should follow careful, long-range planning and data collection with major involvement of all interested parties, particularly teachers.

3. The plan should address not only salary and evaluation issues, but also the factors that most affect teaching performance: opportunities for professional growth and development; supervisory and other supports for teacher improvement; and methods for reducing teacher isolation.

4. The plan should provide a means for all qualified teachers to progress through the career ladder, rather than allowing artificial quotas to develop due to insufficient funding or inadequate evaluation processes.

School-Based Merit Pay Plans

Rationale: Merit pay awards to all of the teachers in outstanding schools will provide recognition for outstanding teachers and will encourage teachers to cooperate toward common goals.

Pros:

- School-based merit pay awards may provide monetary incentives to teachers without causing competition among teachers that would detract from cooperative efforts.

- School-based merit pay awards would provide recognition for the best (or the most improved) schools as well as for groups of teachers who contribute to the school's success. Thus, such awards might stimulate school improvement as well as individual teacher improvement.

Cons:

- As with individual merit pay plans, there is no evidence that monetary rewards, by themselves, are effective teacher incentives.

- As with individual merit pay plans, a school could receive an award one year and not the next, thus lessening the long-range value of the incentive. There would be substantial pressure to rotate the award among schools to avoid appearances of favoritism.

- The award would not necessarily recognize outstanding teachers, since there would be some outstanding teachers in schools not chosen for the award and some less-than-outstanding teachers in schools chosen for the award.

- There is no evidence that teachers in schools not receiving awards will perceive increased incentives for increasing their efforts.

- Almost any criteria chosen for the awards would tend to exclude some schools from the group of potential winners, based not on the efforts of teachers but on other environmental factors that influence school climate, student achievement, attendance, etc. If awards are for high-performing schools, low-performing schools would be excluded; if awards are for most-improved schools, high-performing schools would be excluded because they would be unable to show large gains.

- Awards may tend to exacerbate perceptions of unequal teaching and learning conditions across schools.

Conditions for Effective Implementation:

1. Awards should be plentiful enough that many schools can be recognized each year. (Dallas, for example, will award bonuses to teachers in 25 percent of the district's schools in the first year of their plan.)

2. A wide range of criteria should be used as the basis for the awards, so that important educational goals are not ignored by the incentive system and so that distortions of the educational process are not encouraged. Special care should be taken in the use of students' standardized achievement test scores in this context, as dysfunctional consequences for curriculum, student placements, and open enrollments can occur from emphasis on such measures in incentive systems.

3. The selection process should be careful and thorough; membership of the evaluation/selection team should be broadly representative. In addition to written documentation of school conditions, multiple school visits by multiple evaluators should be conducted.

4. Funding for the program should be adequate to sustain the bonus component as well as the evaluation/selection activities without affecting program and salary budgets for all schools.

School Improvement Awards

Rationale: Awards for implementing school improvement proposals reward teachers and administrators for extra efforts to tackle school problems and encourage cooperation and teamwork among teachers within a school.

Pros:

- School improvement awards may provide both monetary and non-monetary incentives to teachers and schools for extra efforts to improve school climate, student learning and behavior, and other school activities.

- Some studies indicate that school-based discretionary funds for improvement activities provide greater incentives to teachers than salary bonuses by allowing them greater opportunities to try new ideas for improving the learning environment.

- School improvement awards may improve both school and teacher morale by both recognizing teachers' efforts and accomplishments and by providing support for continued improvement initiatives.

- Dissemination of information about school improvement programs and practices may stimulate improvements in other schools as well as those receiving the awards.

- School improvement awards may be less divisive than merit pay awards, since they do not draw explicit distinctions between "meritorious" and "nonmeritorious" schools and teachers.

Cons:

- School improvement awards will not necessarily recognize all of the most outstanding teachers or schools.

- A school could receive an award one year and not the next, thus lessening the long-term incentives for improvement, except to the extent that the practices stimulated by the award have spillover effects on school operations and morale.

- Depending on how they are distributed, school improvement awards could exacerbate perceptions of unequal teaching and learning conditions across schools.

Conditions for Effective Implementation: The concept of school improvement awards has recently been implemented in the context of "effective school" programs. Several conditions have emerged as important for the effective use of school improvement awards:

1. School improvement proposals should be developed with broad participation on the part of school staff, so that there is sufficient commitment to implementing the proposed program.

2. The proposals should have clearly defined goals that meet widely-perceived school needs and a carefully-spelled out strategy for reaching the goals.

3. A broad range of criteria should be used in making the awards, so that schools with differing problems and needs can be eligible for the awards.

- The program should include funds for evaluation of outcomes and dissemination of results, so that award recipients receive feedback and recognition and other schools can benefit from the effort as well.

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